

Amendments to the Claims

The following claims are intended to replace all prior versions of the claims in this application (in the unlikely event that a claim number previously recited is not listed, the previous claim will remain):

1. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition comprising a derivative of poly(2-propenal, 2-propenoic acid) having protected carbonyl groups formed by reaction between a poly(2-propenal, 2-propenoic acid) and an organic compound containing one or more hydroxyl groups under conditions effective to form said derivative of poly(2-propenal, 2-propenoic acid) having protected carbonyl groups.
2. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 wherein the derivative comprises a multiplicity of protected carbonyl groups selected from at least one of hemiacetal groups and acetal groups.
3. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 wherein the protected carbonyl groups include acetal groups.
4. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 wherein the organic compound is selected from alkanols, polyols and mixtures thereof.
5. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 4 wherein the organic compound comprises at least one polyol.
6. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 5 wherein the polyol comprises a polyalkylene glycol.
7. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 5 wherein the polyol comprises a polyethylene glycol.
8. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 5 wherein the polyol is a polyethylene glycol of molecular weight of from 200 to 2000.
9. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~A_n~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 5 wherein the polyol is a polyethylene glycol of molecular weight in the range of from 200 to 1000.

10. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~An~~ antimicrobial composition for treating or preventing gastrointestinal disease in animals by gastrointestinal administration said antimicrobial composition comprising the antimicrobial of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically or veterinarily acceptable inert carrier for gastrointestinal administration to animals.
11. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~An~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 10 wherein the carrier for gastrointestinal administration is selected from the group consisting of controlled release polymers, olive oil, peanut oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil, arachis oil, coconut oil, liquid paraffin, ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, ethanol, propanol, isopropanol, glycerol, fatty alcohols, triglycerides, polyvinyl alcohol, partially hydrolysed polyvinylacetate and mixtures thereof.
12. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~An~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 10 in the form of a feed additive or drinking water additive comprising from 0.1 to 70% by weight of the antimicrobial.
13. (currently amended) A drinking water composition comprising water and an antimicrobially effective amount of a polymeric ~~an~~ antimicrobial composition according to claim 1.
14. (canceled)
15. (currently amended) A drinking water composition according to claim 13 containing in the range of from 0.0001 to 10% by weight of the polymeric antimicrobial composition.
16. (currently amended) An antimicrobial composition comprising ~~an~~ a polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 and a further active agent selected from the group consisting of antimicrobials and chemotherapeutic agents.
17. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~An~~ antimicrobial composition comprising an antimicrobial according to claim 1 and adsorbed thereon a further active agent selected from the group consisting of antimicrobials, chemotherapeutics and sunscreens, wherein the further active agent includes one or more groups selected from the group consisting of phenyl compounds, aromatic compounds, alkyl compounds and amphipathic compounds.

18. (currently amended) An antiseptic or preservative composition comprising a polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 and at least one further antimicrobial substance.
19. (previously presented) An antiseptic or preservative composition according to claim 18 wherein the further antimicrobial substance is selected from the group consisting of EDTA, lower alkanol, a phenol, an isothiazolinone, glutaraldehyde and alkylparaben.
20. (previously presented) An antiseptic or preservative composition according to claim 18 wherein the further antimicrobial substance is selected from the group consisting of lower alkanol, orthophenyl phenol, chloroxylenol and lower alkyl paraben.
21. (previously presented) An antiseptic or preservative composition according to claim 18 wherein the further antimicrobial substance comprises (on a weight basis of the composition) at least one of
 - (a) a phenol in an amount of from 0.1 to 10%;
 - (b) an isothiazolinone in an amount of 0.001 to 1%;
 - (c) alkyl parabens in an amount of 0.02 to 2%; and
 - (d) lower alkanol in an amount of from 20 to 99.9%.
22. (previously presented) An antiseptic or preservative composition according to claim 21 wherein the further antimicrobial substance is selected from the group consisting of the phenols chloroxylenol and orthophenylphenol, and the isothiazolinone 2-n-alkyl-4-isothiazoline-3-one.
23. (currently amended) An antiseptic composition for application to skin comprising a polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 and an emulsion composition comprising an oil phase, an aqueous phase and an emulsifier.
24. (currently amended) A method for treatment or prophylaxis of gastrointestinal disease in an animal comprising gastrointestinal administration to the animal of an antimicrobially effective amount of a polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1.
25. (currently amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition is orally administered.

26. (previously presented) A method according to claim 24 wherein the animal is suffering from at least one gastrointestinal disease selected from the group consisting of gastroenteritis, ulcer, diarrhoea, gastrointestinal cancer, dysentery, and insufficient weight gain.
27. (previously presented) A method according to claim 24 wherein the animal is suffering from at least one of diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, and dysentery.
28. (original) A method according to claim 24 wherein the animal is selected from the group consisting of dogs, pigs, sheep, horses, cattle, cats, poultry, ducks, turkeys and quail.
29. (original) A method according to claim 24 wherein the animal is selected from ruminant animals and the antimicrobial is rectally administered.
30. (original) A method according to claim 24 wherein the animal is selected from poultry and pigs.
31. (original) A method according to claim 30 wherein the animal is a partially grown pig.
32. (currently amended) A method for treatment or prophylaxis of porcine post weaning colibacillosis comprising orally administering to young pigs after weaning, an antimicrobially effective amount of ~~the~~ a polymeric antimicrobial composition of claim 1.
33. (currently amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition ~~of claim 1~~ is administered at a dose of from 0.05 to 5000 mg/kg/day.
34. (currently amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition ~~of claim 1~~ is administrated at a dose in the range of from 0.5 to 500 mg/kg/day.
35. (currently amended) A method according to claim 32 wherein the young pigs are administered a dose of the polymeric antimicrobial composition in the range of from 0.05 to 50 mg/kg/day.

36. (previously presented) A method according to claim 24 wherein the gastrointestinal disease results from one or more microbes selected from the group consisting of Coliforms, Salmonella, *P. aeruginosa*, Helicobacter, Proteus, Enterobacteria, Yeasts, Protozoa, Clostridia and Shigella.
37. (previously presented) A method according to claim 24 wherein the gastrointestinal disease results from one or more of *H. pylori* and Coccidia.
38. (original) A method according to claim 24 wherein the gastrointestinal disease results from at least one of enterotoxigenic *E. coli* and β -haemolytic *E. coli*.
39. (currently amended) A method of treatment or prevention of necrotic enteritis in poultry comprising administering to poultry an effective amount of ~~the~~ a polymeric antimicrobial composition of claim 1.
40. (currently amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition is administered in combination with a further chemotherapeutic adsorbed thereon to thereby reduce membrane penetration of the further chemotherapeutic.
41. (original) A method according to claim 40 wherein the further chemotherapeutic is selected from antibiotics and anticancer agents.
42. (currently amended) A method of treatment or prevention of coccidiosis in poultry comprising administering to poultry an antimicrobially effective amount of ~~the~~ a polymeric antimicrobial composition of claim 1.
43. (currently amended) A sunscreen composition comprising an active agent selected from the group consisting of aminobenzoates, salicylates, benzophenone, anthranilates, dibenzoylmethanes, camphor derivatives, cinnamates, titanium dioxide and zinc oxide and a polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1.
44. (currently amended) A polymeric antimicrobial composition according to claim 1 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition exhibits a significant reduction or absence of an H^1 NMR signal at about $\delta 5.5$ in D_2O , as compared to poly(2-propenal, 2-propenoic acid).

45. (currently amended) A polymeric ~~An antimicrobial~~ composition according to claim 1 wherein the organic compound is a phenol.
46. (currently amended) An animal feed composition comprising a feed material and an antimicrobially effective amount of a polymeric ~~an antimicrobial~~ composition according to claim 1.
47. (currently amended) An animal feed composition according to claim 46 wherein the polymeric antimicrobial composition is present in an amount of from 0.001 to 25% by weight of the total feed composition.